

BOOK REVIEW

Endodontoid Land Snails from Pacific Islands (Mollusca:Pulmonata: Sigmurethra). Part II. Families Punctidae and Charopidae, Zoogeography. By Alan Solem. Chicago, Field Museum Press, 1982. 336pp., 143 figs., 76 tables.

The first volume in this set (Part I. Family Endodontidae) appeared in 1976. Although the basic descriptive work for the second volume was completed in 1969, another 13 years elapsed before publication. Much of this time was spent refining the manuscript through the addition of extensive data derived from scanning electron microscopy as well as important information on extralimital taxa. Final editing was concluded in 1978.

Completion of the second volume concluded a project started by the author in 1960, which sought to review the endodontoid land snails of Polynesia, Micronesia and Fiji. Together the two monographs are based on the analysis of more than 26,000 specimens and review 290 species level taxa belonging to more than 45 genera. Of these, 84 per cent of the genera and 54 per cent of the species described are new. These figures give some quantitative measure of the scope and detail of the work involved in the compilation of the two volumes.

The reports are based largely on collections in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu. Much of the material was amassed by the late C. Montague Cooke Jr. in a lifetime of effort, and as the author readily admits, the success of the project was possible only because of work done by Cooke and Yoshio Kondo, who assisted with the collecting and prepared illustrations of many of the species. A number of his illustrations were used in the first volume.

Part II reviews 98 species level taxa. As was the case with Part I, the presentation is excellent. In a preliminary to the systematic review, the author details the methods of analysis and presents detailed discussion on the variation in morphological characters (hard and soft parts) which is exhibited in members of the two families reviewed. The narrative is supported by excellent figures and tables and will enable other workers to indulge in the luxury of making critical evaluations of the author's conclusions from the data presented.

The systematic review consists of detailed diagnoses of the taxa and in the case of species level taxa which display problematic intraspecific variation, a description of the holotype. Where possible, all soft parts viewed have been meticulously described. The accompanying drawings demonstrate the value of an excellent biological illustrator, or as is the case here, illustrators. Tables are liberally used to provide quantitative support for the conclusions presented in the text. Anatomical data on a number of extralimital taxa are also given where these are critical to the understanding of overall relationships.

Finally a zoogeographic analysis of all three families covered in the two volumes is given.

In dealing with the Punctidae and Charopidae, the author was well aware that these two families have their main centres of diversity elsewhere. Lack of comprehensive work on these groups in other areas precluded a complete coverage. Nevertheless the assignment of subfamilial and generic units for the Pacific Island Study necessitated the dissection of more than 75 extralimital species. The data from this work were presented in a number of other publications by the author, and are often referred to in the two volumes. However no attempt is made to present an overall classification of the Charopidae due to the many gaps in our knowledge of the group.

It is not possible to consider this work on its own as it is so intertwined with Part I. Yet it stands on its own, as a further monument to a Malacologist, who is following in the high traditions begun by workers such as H. Pilsbry and H.B. Baker in setting new standards of excellence which can only serve as an inspiration to others. From a more practical viewpoint, completion of Part II provides the necessary base from which to pursue the study of the Charopidae in the Australian region.

J. Stanisic